ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

Lipid-nucleic acid particles can provide therapeutic benefits, even when the nucleic acid is not complementary to coding sequences in target cells. It has been found that lipid-nucleic acid particles, including those containing non-sequence specific oligodeoxynucleotides, can be used to stimulate cytokine secretion, thus enhancing the overall immune response of a treated mammal. Further, immune response to specific target antigens can be induced by administration of a antigenic molecule in association with lipid particles containing non-sequence specific oligodeoxynucleotides. The nucleic acid which is included in the lipid-nucleic acid particle can be a phosphodiester (i.e., an oligodeoxynucleotide consisting of nucleotide residues joined by phosphodiester linkages) or a modified nucleic acid which includes phosphorothioate or other modified linkages, and may suitably be one which is non-complementary to the human genome, such that it acts to provide immunostimulation in a manner which is independent of conventional base-pairing interactions between the nucleic acid and nucleic acids of the treated mammal. In particular, the nucleic acid may suitably contain an immune-stimulating motif such as a CpG motif, or an immune stimulating palindromic sequence. The cationic lipid included in the nucleic acid particles may be suitably selected from among DODAP, DODMA, DMDMA, DOTAP, DC-Chol, DDAB, DODAC, DMRIE, DOSPA and DOGS. In addition, the lipid particle may suitably contain an modified aggregation-limiting lipid such as a PEG-lipid, a PAO-lipid or a ganglioside.